

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of generating a logically merged web module for a web application, comprising:

~~determining if the web application includes a reference to at least one shared web module, that is capable of being incorporated into a plurality of web applications, in a shared web module designation file, responsive to a determination that a shared module designation file exists, identifying at least one shared web module from the shared module designation file to be incorporated into a web application, to form at least one identified shared web module, wherein the shared web module description designation file includes all descriptors that reference the at least one shared web modules module;~~

~~locating the at least one identified shared web module using path information;~~

~~specifying a path to a location of the at least one shared web module; and~~

~~logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application, in accordance with the shared web module designation file to generate a logically merged web application, wherein a reference to the at least one shared web module is used in the logically merged web application rather than a copy of the at least one shared web module.~~

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

loading the logically merged web application into a web container.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the web application is an enterprise archive (EAR) and wherein the logically merged web application is a logically merged EAR.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one shared web module includes at least one of a web archive (WAR) file, an enterprise java bean (EJB) archive file, and a resource archive (RAR) file.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application includes:

determining a priority associated with the at least one shared web module; and
resolving any conflicts between shared web modules in the at least one shared web module and
conflicts between the at least one shared web module and web modules of the web application, if any.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the steps of ~~determining, specifying, identifying, locating~~, and logically merging are performed during an initialization process of a runtime environment for initializing the web application to be run on a server.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein logically merging the at least one shared web module with the web modules of the web application includes using a service provider interface (SPI) that provides merge logic for merging different module types.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the container uses one or more application program interfaces (APIs) to identify [[the]] a path to the at least one shared web module and loads the at least one shared web module when loading the logically merged web application.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application includes at least one of relinking references to the at least one shared web module in the web modules of the web application, extrapolating policy information for the at least one shared web module from a policy file associated with the web application, and modifying a class path for the web application to include paths to each of the at least one shared web modules.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for generating a logically merged web module for a web application, comprising a computer usable recordable type medium having computer executable instructions tangibly embodied thereon, the computer executable instructions comprising:

~~first computer executable instructions for determining if the web application includes a reference to at least one shared web module that is capable of being incorporated into a plurality of web applications in a shared web module designation file responsive to a determination that a shared module designation file exists, for identifying at least one shared web module from the shared module designation file to be incorporated into a web application, to form at least one identified shared web module, wherein the shared web module designation file includes all descriptors that reference the at least one shared web module;~~

~~second computer executable instructions for specifying a path to a location of the at least one shared web module locating the at least one identified shared web module using path information; and~~

~~third~~ computer executable instructions for logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application, in accordance with the shared web module designation file, to generate a logically merged web application, wherein a reference to the at least one shared web module is used rather than a copy of the at least one shared web module in the logically merged web application.

12. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 11, further comprising:
~~fourth~~ computer executable instructions for loading the logically merged web application into a web container.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 11, wherein the ~~third~~ computer executable instructions for logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application include:

computer executable instructions for determining a priority associated with the at least one shared web module; and

computer executable instructions for resolving any conflicts between shared web modules in the at least one shared web module and conflicts between the at least one shared web module and web modules of the web application;~~if any~~.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 11, wherein the ~~first, second and third~~ computer executable instructions are executed during an initialization process of a runtime environment for initializing the web application to be run on a server.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 11, wherein the ~~third~~ computer executable instructions for logically merging the at least one shared web module with the web modules of the web application include computer-executable instructions for using a service provider interface (SPI) that provides merge logic for merging different module resources.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the container uses one or more application program interfaces (APIs) to identify [[the]] a path to the at least one shared web module.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 11, wherein the third computer executable instructions for logically merging the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application include at least one of computer executable instructions for relinking references to the at least one shared web module in the web modules of the web application, computer executable instructions for extrapolating policy information for the at least one shared web module from a policy file associated with the web application, and computer executable instructions for modifying a class path for the web application to include paths to each of the at least one shared web modules.

19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for generating a logically merged web module for a web application, comprising:

a system bus;

a local memory connected to the system bus, wherein the memory contains computer executable instructions;

a processor connected to the system bus, wherein the processor executes the computer executable instructions to direct the apparatus to:

means for determining if the web application includes a reference to at least one shared web module that is capable of being incorporated into a plurality of web applications in a shared web module designation file responsive to a determination that a shared module designation file exists, identify at least one shared web module from the shared module designation file to be incorporated into a web application, to form at least one identified shared web module, wherein the shared web module designation file includes all descriptors that reference the at least one shared web module;

means for specifying a path to a location of locate the at least one identified shared web module using path information; and

means for logically merging merge the at least one shared web module with web modules of the web application, in accordance with the shared web module designation file to generate a logically merged web application, wherein a reference to the at least one shared web module is used rather than a copy of the at least one shared web module in the logically merged web application.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising: wherein the processor further executes the computer executable instructions to direct the apparatus to means for loading load the logically merged web application into a web container.